



Japan Christian Activity News

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NCCJ WELCOMES CHINESE DELEGATES

Rev. SHOJI Tsutomu, who accompanied the 10 Chinese delegates from Tokyo to Nagasaki, writes the following reflection. Excerpts from the "Joint Communique" are on page 2.

The visitation of the Chinese was indeed a heart warming one. I'm sure I will never forget it. My memory will be enriched with deeper meanings as time elapses.

I was moved by the spiritual richness of Bishop Ting and other Chinese delegates and truly impressed by their trust in our merciful and gracious God, their love for their people and their sincerity to learn from Christians in Japan. Japanese Christians of the cities, colleges, churches and organizations where they visited received them with joy and enthusiasm as neighbours of one and

the same faith. They entertained them with their own local colours.

When they reached Nagasaki, which is the nearest city to China in a historical sense, it was October 1st: China's National Day. Christians in Nagasaki received them with celebration.

Following are a couple of the many impressions I gained from the visitors: Their emphasis on selfhood and Chinese-ness of their Christianity is both a theory and policy of mission as well as a way of life, firmly based on Christian convictions. I realized that the delegates bear the three-self ideals in their own lives and attitudes as deeply ingrained morals.

The stepping into the post-denominational stage which China has achieved is a great experiment in church history; it is a way to overcome denominational divisions and to seek church unity. It is based on the Biblical understanding of locality and universality of the Church, as well as on the historical situation of Chinese churches. These two points urge us, Japanese Christians, to seriously re-examine our own selfhood and the locality of our church. It is then that we can contribute to the fellowship of the universal church.



From left:	6th person from left:
Li Ming	Bishop K.H. Ting
Yin Shian	Chen Ze-min
Wu Ai-en	Liu Nian-fen
Wu Gao-zi	Sun Xi-pei
Li Shoubao	Shen Guang-wei

CHINA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL VISITS JAPAN EXCERPTS FROM THE "JOINT COMMUNIQUE"

At the invitation of the National Christian Council in Japan, ten leading Chinese Christians were sent by the China Christian Council to visit Japan from September 22 to October 2, 1984. The composition of the Chinese delegation was such that it included among the ten both men and women, both old and young, both clergy and laity. There were national, provincial and local church leaders, grass-roots pastors, women's and youth workers, and those in the work of theological and university education. The delegation had in it deputies to the People's Congresses and members of the People's Political Consultation Conferences at their national, provincial and local levels. It was noteworthy for its inclusion of a woman minister from the Korean ethnic minority in China and of a young theological student from Nanjing Seminary.

The Chinese delegation spent time in Tokyo, Sendai, Sapporo, Nagoya, Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, and Nagasaki. Aside from many meetings, the visitors brought greetings and gave sermons in a large number of churches, particularly on Sundays in Tokyo and Hiroshima. The lectures delivered by Bishop K.H. Ting of Nanjing Theological Seminary in Rikkyo University as Bishop Williams Memorial Lecturer on "Theological Mass Movement in China" and in Doshisha University as Neijima Lecturer on "A Rationale for Three-Self" and by Chen Zemin of the same seminary at the Center for East Asian Studies of the International Christian University on "The Protestant Church in China Today" were listened to with special interest and gratification for their theological insight and learned, in-depth treatment of the subjects.

The Christians in Japan were deeply impressed by the Chinese Christians' achievement not only in self-government, self-support and self-propagation for their churches, but also in their present post-denominational existence whose unity transcends

theological differences inherited from Christians elsewhere and of a past period, while giving due respect to historic characteristics in matters of faith and worship which Chinese Christians do cherish. Because of the emerging Chineseness of the church, the number of Christians in China in the course of the last 35 years has not decreased, but has increased to the extent of four times, as far as non-Roman Catholic Christians are concerned.

Chinese Christians are today united on a much wider scale than ever before. It was heartening for Japanese Christians to learn of the tremendous efforts being made by the China Christian Council in the printing of Chinese Bibles, including those for some of the minority nationalities, and in the proliferation of theological training centers for overcoming the big age-gap in leadership that exists now, and to note the careful, responsible way theological re-thinking has been going on among Chinese Christian intellectuals and rank-and-file Christians. The Japanese also have much to learn from the advanced Chinese policy regarding ethnic minorities.

The Chinese visitors were impressed by the youthfulness, the fervor, the efficiency, the quality and the good organization of the work of the Christian bodies in Japan on all levels, and by the degree of independence achieved by the Japanese Christians. They were grateful to learn of the gigantic witnessing efforts being made by Japanese Christians for world peace. They listened with sympathy to reports of the Japanese Christians' struggles on nuclear weapons, the revision of the textbooks, the nationalization of Yasukuni Shinto Shrine, and the discrimination against minority groups such as the Koreans, the Buraku people and the Ainu. These struggles have been impelled by insights into the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Chinese Christians wished to express their solidarity with the Japanese Christians in their concern for peace for this and future generations. The world situation today in which the two superpowers contend almost everywhere certainly calls us
(continued on next page)

China Communique, continued

Christians and all persons of goodwill to take to heart the defense of world peace against threats of aggression and nuclear destruction. The Chinese Christians were also impressed by the unity of the Christians which the National Christian Council in Japan represents and by the work of evangelism which many Japanese Christians are eager to do.

It is admirable that Japanese Christians in sincerity and humility confessed their guilt on several occasions for the events between the two countries during the 1930's and the 1940's. However, the Chinese Christians wished to point out that a distinction needs to be made between militarism and the militarists that caused the suffering on the one hand and their victims who included the common folk in Japan just as much as in China on the other hand. These victims bore no responsibility for the evil done. As we look back it was really a short past episode within a long history of peace, harmony and mutual cultural enrichment between neighbors. The Chinese Christians appreciate the variety of ways in which Japanese Christians today are working to ensure peace for the present and for the future.

Our two churches are similar in that we are both minorities within overwhelmingly secular milieus. We, in our different ways, are both trying to build up a selfhood which is both Christian and national, for the sake of bearing an effective witness of Jesus Christ to our own people. We have every reason to develop a specially close inter-church relation.

We propose:

That the China Christian Council and the National Christian Council in Japan keep each other informed of their respective concerns and work, and transmit appropriate news to their respective constituencies;
That the two bodies explore ways and means for joint prayer and actions for peace in the world and in Asia;

-and, That the two bodies seek to make possible more frequent mutual visits, especially between specialists in theological education and between youths, that some of the visits could be such as to enable visitors to go into certain questions in greater depths, and that visitation for the sharing of our concern for peace be given priority.

Signed,

Inha Lee, Chairperson, NCCJ

Tsutomu Shoji, General Secretary, NCCJ

Bartholomew Kentaro Takeuchi,

Chairperson, Committee on International Relations, NCCJ

K.H. Ting, President, China Christian Council

Li Shaobao, Vice Chairperson, National Three-Self Patriotic Movement Comm.

George K.T. Wu, Vice President, China Christian Council

October 1, 1984



Dr. K.H. Ting

Dr. Inha Lee

UNITY, LABOUR, JOY: THEME OF 12th ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL AT ARI

Asian Rural Institute in Nishi-Nasuno, Tochigi prefecture, held its 12th Annual Harvest Festival October 13-14, drawing nearly 4,000 people over the two day period. Large groups of children from the community came, showing the support of local schools and institutions. Visitors converged on the rural campus from near and far to sample the international cuisine prepared by ARI staff and student participants of 17 Asian, Pacific and African countries.

The theme, "Unity, Labour, Joy" captured the festive spirit of the days as curries and coconut dishes, roasted corn and chicken prepared the tastebuds for apple cake and freshly made yogurt with rhubarb jam.

(Continued on page 4.)

ASIAN RURAL INSTITUTE, continued

Amid the delicacies, the stocking up of fresh organically grown vegetables, homemade breads and jams, and the purchasing of native craft products, visitors were treated to a cultural show of dances, songs and skits by the ARI participants. Among the most memorable was what might be called a Korean version of "Old MacDonald had a farm," complete with Korean style animal sounds.



Octavina Yeblo, a rural development worker from Indonesia barbeques yakitori at ARI Harvest Festival.

Each day of the festival began with a thanksgiving worship service in celebration of the bounty being harvested: The harvest of food, the harvest of personal growth, and the harvest of growth as a community. ARI has seen 405 participants graduate from the 9 month training program, 110 of which have been women. These rural leaders often come from situations of draught and inefficient agricultural production to learn organic and technologically appropriate farming methods which they can employ upon returning to their home countries. Since the completion of the new dining hall, ARI has begun to make plans for the building of a women's dormitory.

ECUMENICAL PRAYER MEETING ON PHILIPPINES

The Philippine struggle for peace, justice and democracy was the topic of an Ecumenical Prayer Meeting held October 12 at Tokyo's Mejiro Anglican Church. The first of its kind in Tokyo, the prayer meeting was held under the auspices of the NCCJ Committee on Japan-Philippine relations and the Catholic Council for Justice and Peace Philippine Action Committee. In spite of rough weather, about 100 Protestant and Catholic, clergy and laity came together for the common meeting. It was presided by Father K. Yamada, S.J.

Sister S. Hirota (M.M.B.) offered a keynote address, reporting not only on the present situation in the Philippines, but also the Japanese Christian movement for solidarity. Rev. K. Nakamura (Anglican) gave a Bible study on Acts 18:9-10, urging people to "speak and not be silent."

Guest speaker Bishop F. Claver, S.J., from the island of Mindanao, Philippines, told about the people's suffering, the church activity and the sagacity of the poor under the present critical situation. He also emphasized his position of nonviolence in the midst of the struggle, from the context of the church.

Rev. M. Maejima (Kyodan) preached about Japan-Philippine relations, specifically on mutual images of both peoples. He referred to the Japanese Emperor system as one of the main factors which creates and sustains the sense of Japanese race superiority over other Asian peoples.

A piano medley, arranged and performed by Ms. M. MARUI (Kyodan), combined images of Philippine nationalist songs, including "Ang Bayan Ko" (which means "our country"). This was played as slides depicting everyday life in the Philippines were shown in meditation.

NCCJ Philippine Committee is sponsoring a related meeting on October 27 at St. Paul's University Chapel in Tokyo. Anglican Bishop Longid of the Philippines will address Japan-Philippine economic relations. #

WOMEN'S SHELTER SEEKS FUNDING, STAFF

When Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union celebrates its 100th Anniversary in 1986, they plan to do so with the opening of a new women's shelter in Tokyo. According to the Ministry of Justice, 1,041 Filipinos, 557 Thais, 528 Chinese and 114 Koreans were apprehended for over-staying their 90-day tourist visas. The report says that they were hostesses (68%), strippers (14%), maids (4%); and not a small number of them were prostitutes employed in similar work, brought by organized "Boryokudan" gangsters. (May 4, 1984, The Asahi Newspaper.)

It is the intent of the WCTU to offer a way for these women caught in the midst of economic need and legal vulnerability to regain their personal dignity as well as safety while they are in transition. The seeds of this project were planted some 25 years ago when the WCTU building opened one room for Japanese women in need of rest, help and

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"STRANGERS WITHIN OUR GATES": ASIAN WOMEN IN MIGRANT SITUATIONS

Fifty-eight women from 16 Asian countries met in Manila, Philippines, September 3-9, for a CCA sponsored consultation on Asian Women in Migrant Situations. The theme, "Strangers Within our Gates," reflected the difficult situations of migrating women who are persuaded to seek a living in a foreign country and find themselves exploited by economic and even criminal systems in the process.

In a conclusive report of the consultation released by the Women's Desk of the Christian Conference of Asia, the sponsoring body, the women were said to have met "in anger which has accumulated in our lives... The degree of anger may differ, but each participant gathered with commitment to issues concerning women, and to migrant women workers in particular."

Rev. Iseko Kawase, Kyodan pastor, reflected, "this was my first time to visit the Philippines, and my experience started immediately when I got into the plane. When we were seated, we found ourselves suddenly surrounded by people who were going back to the Philippines after working in Japan. At the Manila International Airport, we had to find our luggage among the large boxes marked 'Sony' and 'National', filled with things purchased in Japan.

"It struck me as we stood watching for our suitcases, that what we were seeing revolve around the luggage carousals was the relationship between Japan and the Philippines."

The relationship between the Asian countries and how women were caught in situations of exploitation as a result, continued to take shape as the consultation progressed. Rev. Kawase's opening Bible study described the situation of women in Asia: "In despair we have endured oppressive structures. For us it is too difficult to be subordinate any longer. While starvation is the predominant problem in developing countries, over-eating and over-weight are the headaches in advanced nations. In the shadow of extended life-spans, infant mortality through malnutrition threatens life. Humanity has deteriorated in the midst of unmoving social structures, and maldistribution of wealth destroys life. Issues related to women's rights have been neglected and we remain at the bottom of all social structures, weighted down by multiple layers of oppression."

With discussion groups focusing on four facets of women's experience, sex tourism, minority issues, church renewal, and women migrant workers, the questions continued to present themselves. "How do we, as Christians respond to this? How can women themselves challenge the situations of exploitation? How can Christianity, the Church and the Bible become the sources of female empowerment?"

The consultation explored the histories of Asian countries where Christianity
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Asian Women, continued

has contributed to the oppression of peoples. The situation of Aotearoa (the native Maori name for New Zealand) was a prime example. Ancestors of the polynesian Maori people who now inhabit Aotearoa, were crossing the Pacific ocean when they discovered the land of the "long, white cloud." The Maori translation for this description, "aotearoa", became the name they chose for their home.

For them, New Zealand was named by the colonizers who brought Christianity which squelched the dignity of the Maori people and mocked the sacredness of their faith. The Christian faith has continued to destroy the nature and culture of the Maori; this pain and suffering was told to the Manila gathering. Christianity, by emphasizing individual salvation, took away personal possessions of people as a tool to control them and enforce the policies of the oppressors. The present national rulers in Asia use religion in the same way, repeating the oppressive systems and methods of past rulers.

A Korean delegate reported, "the Christian population in Korea is 25%, but we cannot even change the country's policies. This is a great pain for us."

Participants went to visit a group of women strikers in a textile factory which was owned by a Taiwanese. The plant was flooded with water from Manila Bay. At high tide, residents and workers are forced to contend with hip-deep water, while low-tide puts them to their knees in the dirty pool. In this situation, the women protest their low wages and horrendous working conditions.

Rev. Kawase recalled, "I visited the home of a migrant worker where the husband is away working in Saudi Arabia. The money which he sends to his wife is quickly consumed by taxes and bank fees, and what is left goes to the family's medical needs. The wife is forced to supplement the income by working at night."

What is the Church doing in each of these situations? The group on church renewal tried to address this issue. "We agreed that we should not follow the Christianity which was taught to us by others," said Rev. Kawase, "rather, we should reinterpret the Bible into our own contexts and lives. I found that the women in this group were all seeking new understandings of their faith. But our common commitment was to oppose colonialism from the Christian context. Christianity must now speak clearly against the established social system and the Christianity which perpetuates and embraces power of oppression."

Among the many proposals for practical action, there was strong support for simultaneous campaign for Asian women's issues to be undertaken in each country on March 8th (International Women's Day) each year, providing common posters, theme and programs. March 8, 1985, would be an appropriate time to emphasize migrant women, and to invite women from a wide variety of backgrounds to participate and support the programs.

It seems necessary to assess the special characteristics of Asia and Asian women which encourage migration and which account for its worst features. As long as employers hire migrant women workers because they are docile and "easy to control", as long as men from richer countries spend money on women because they are "exotic, sexy, submissive, or easy to dupe", the situation of migrant women or the status of Asian women will remain the same. They may attain a little personal freedom by economic gains, but nothing more. The issues like equal opportunities, women's dignity, self-development, or freedom to decide still remain to be tackled.

Consultation participants came to realize that "strangers" are Asian sisters and neighbours. We need to struggle together in our pursuit of authentic personhood. This solidarity for liberation and sharing in the struggle for justice is one way in which we work to bring koinonia into the world.

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MILITARY LANDING EXERCISES A THREAT TO LIFE

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
Believing firmly that shalom should prevail on all the earth, we appeal to Christians in America and other parts of the world to support our court struggle against noise pollution caused by the U.S. fighter planes at Atsugi military base in Japan.

U.S. Marine and Air forces have been using our town, Atsugi, for military purposes, and now Japan's Self Defense Forces have begun to use the same airbase. Our lives are threatened by this base.

We have not forgotten the many kindnesses you showed us during the aftermath of World War II when our land was recovering from total destruction. As a result of Japan's defeat in the war, we adopted a Peace Constitution which has remained our symbol of hope these years. Especially Chapter II, Article 9, the "Renunciation of War" clause, has captured for us the spirit of the Constitution's commitment to peace which we know as coming from the Bible.

However, the Japanese government has been increasing its military strength and plans to solve its problems in the future with military power. The painful reality now is that the U.S. military and the Self Defense Forces of Japan have been causing unbearable torment in Atsugi where 400,000 people live in a 4 kilometer area surrounding the base. The U.S. fighter planes F4 Phantom, A6 Intruder, A7 Corsair, F8 Crusader and the P3C have been using the runway of the Midway at Yokosuka Naval Base for take off and landing exercises. The time when the noise from this activity is the worst is during the evenings, from 6:00 p.m. while we are having dinner; it continues until about 11:00 p.m. These repeated "touch and go" landing exercises create enormous roaring blasts from the planes, and we are concerned and convinced that this is threatening to our lives. The effects are especially apparent with small children and

babies whose hearing is most sensitive and sleep most essential to proper health.

The church which should be a strong and visible witness to justice and peace finds it practically impossible to carry on programs under this noise. There is no peace as long as these fighter planes persist in causing the impossible conditions under which we live. Both the level of noise pollution as well as our bitterness and exhaustion from the problem have gone beyond description in words. The blasts from the U.S. fighters symbolize the destructive powers of the military presence which negates the message and sacrifice of Jesus Christ who has made us one in him and brings peace to the world.

The citizens of Atsugi have been fighting the Japanese government for a decrease in the noise pollution caused by the base, and even more desirable, removal of the airbase from the area. We ask your help to rectify this serious evil, and pray that you will commit yourselves to work in solidarity with us rather than ignoring our struggle.

Specifically, we appeal to sisters and brothers in Christ to:

- 1) Understand our appeal and to put pressure on the Pacific Fleet Headquarters to stop the "touch and go" landing exercises at Atsugi military base; and
- 2) Make efforts to review and change military policies in the U.S. Presidential policies which uphold and enforce the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty; and
- 3) Make more widely known the damages caused to people by the military presence in Atsugi area; and
- 4) Keep us informed of your activities, comments or suggestions you have around this issue. It is our wish to be in solidarity with Christians at work in peacemaking in the world. Please contact us c/o NCCJ, rm. 24.

Sincerely,
Plaintiffs in Tokyo High Court against
Atsugi military plane noise pollution.

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lodging. The May 1984 WCTU Assembly passed a measure to remodel this facility to make 10 rooms available to a wider cross section of women.

To realize this goal, the WCTU has launched a fund-raising campaign which will enable the completion of the shelter. WCTU is also looking for staff persons for the facility. They foresee the need for persons capable of legal counsel, and others adept in English, Korean and Japanese languages.

Inquiries and donations may be directed to: Japan WCTU

23-5, 2-chome Hyakunin-cho
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160 JAPAN
(03-361-0934)

KOREAN RESIDENTS STUDYING IN KOREA CHARGED WITH BEING "SPIES"

South Korean authorities recently arrested six people, including four Korean residents in Japan studying in Korea, on charges of being spies for North Korea. Several more have been detained for questioning by the Defense Security Command. It has been the largest round-up of Korean residents in Japan there since Chun Doo Hwan became president.

This is reminiscent of other past so-called spy incidents in which Korean residents have been particularly vulnerable to frame-ups because of their tenuous legal status with regard to both Japan and Korea. "Spy" cases often appear during periods of slight thaws in the relations between South and North Korea. South Korean authorities allege that now there is an increase in spy activities because of its policy of making it easier for overseas citizens to visit the South.

While some of the Korean residents in the current case are non-Christian, the Korean Christian Church in Japan and the Korean National Christian Council are making efforts on their behalf.

PEACEMAKERS: Series II

November 11, 1984 1:30 - 5:00 P.M.

Franciscan Chapel Center, Tokyo

There will be a showing of a recently made T.V. documentary film dealing with the extent and kinds of destruction if today's nuclear weapons were used on major cities such as New York or Tokyo. It expains "Nuclear Winter" in a graphic projection of a nuclear war's aftermath; what the global freeze would be like.

Professor TOYODA Toshiyuki will address the topic of "Eliminating Nuclear Arms." Prof. TOYODA has been actively involved for many years in nuclear research and international peace conferences.

All sessions will be conducted in English.

ASIAN YOUTH ASSEMBLY HELD

Asian Youth Assembly was held in New Delhi, India, Setember 26-Oct. 9. The theme was "Thy Will Be Done." About 250 people from 16 Asian countries, delegates from Chile, Argentina and Peru, together with European and North American delegates attended the conference. The participants shared their experiences of struggle in each of their situations.

Participants from Japan included: Kimura Naoki, Yawata Akihiko, and Shimada Akiko from Japan Anglican Church; Ms. Iino Kaori and Ms. Yamaguchi Sumiyo from the Kyodan; Kim Son Hyo, Korean Christian Church in Japan; Ms. Miyoshi Ayako of the Kyoto Christian Academy. Preparation Committee members from Japan were Rev. Kanzaki Yuji and Yokoyama Masaki. Yanaka Shigeru, Hoshino Moriyuki and Hotta Masahiko presented dramatic interpretation of issues in Japan and of the Assembly itself. Victims of the Minamata disease were invited to give witness to the issues of environmental pollution: Tani Yoichi, Sakamoto Teruki and Yoshinaga Toshio. Chansoo Lee, a Mission Intern working at NCCJ provided Korean-English interpretation.

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